

VOLUNTEER
IOWA

2010
ANNUAL
report

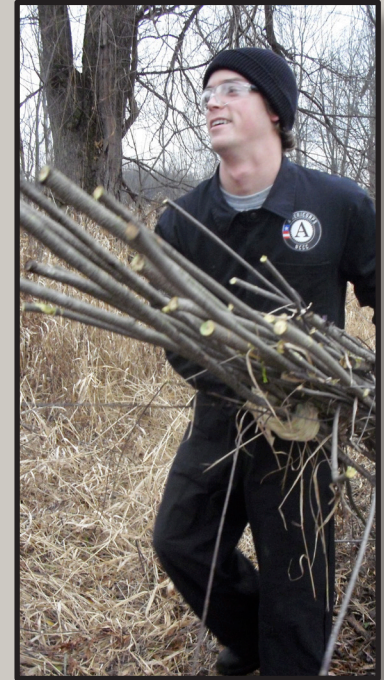


2010 *annual report*

The *Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service* (ICVS) has the responsibility of developing and communicating a statewide vision and ethic of service and promoting that vision throughout the state. This includes promoting service and developing service programs and collaborative approaches that have helped Iowa become a leader in service and volunteerism.

Iowa is ranked 2nd nationally in the percentage of Iowans who volunteer annually and has more cities (five) in the top 20 than any other state in the country. Iowa increased its total volunteer output by 35% from 2007-2009, an addition of more than 28 million hours. During the same period, the national volunteer rate remained relatively flat. The growth of the volunteer rate in Iowa has been attributed to dramatic increases in areas which have been top priorities for ICVS, including enhanced nonprofit capacity due to higher levels of AmeriCorps funding and the provision of additional volunteer management support by new volunteer centers and disaster Volunteer Reception Centers. Furthermore, Iowa has made great strides in specific populations of volunteers that were targeted for improvement:

- College volunteers (rates increased from 32nd in the country in 2006 to 2nd in 2009).
- Volunteers serving with children and youth (between 2006 and 2009 Iowa improved from 17th to 6th in percentage of individuals volunteering as tutors or mentors).



program results

AmeriCorps

The Commission continues to expand its AmeriCorps program activities. AmeriCorps is a competitive program that provides a majority of the funding through an open competition between states and national nonprofits (local nonprofits apply to state commissions). During the 2009-2010 grant year, through ARRA and regular AmeriCorps State Grants the Commission successfully received more than \$5 million of funding for AmeriCorps program operations. In total, we had more than 1,100 AmeriCorps members serving in Iowa and a total federal investment of over \$14 million dollars (these figures include the Vinton NCCC Campus and AmeriCorps VISTA); this does not include the additional multi-million dollar private and local community investment to support these programs. In 2009-2010, AmeriCorps State members were based in 57 Iowa communities and provided service to all 99 of Iowa's counties.



AmeriCorps VISTA and National members and NCCC teams also served 25 Iowa communities. Last summer, the Commission announced a further expansion of AmeriCorps for the 2010-2011 grant year with AmeriCorps State grants and Education Awards of more than \$6 million, a 60% increase in regular AmeriCorps State funding. This increase more than replaces the gap that would have been left by the conclusion of the \$2+ million American Reinvestment and Recovery Augmentation (ARRA) grants received in 2009-2010. Regular (non-ARRA) AmeriCorps State members leveraged nearly 50 volunteers per member in 2009-2010, accounting for more than 28,000 new volunteers recruited, and these AmeriCorps members helped retain many more community volunteers by increasing nonprofits' capacity for effective recruitment and management of volunteers. AmeriCorps programs supported by the Commission fall into seven different "service corps" created by the Serve America Act and the Iowa Legislature (note-ICVS did not fund any Health or Veteran Corps programs in 2009-2010):

Green Corps

ICVS supported the efforts of three AmeriCorps programs addressing environmental and sustainability issues in the 2009-2010 program year, and continued a successful multi-year partnership with the Iowa Power Fund to provide matching funds that leverage federal grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service and local community contributions. In addition, staff assist other programs to bring “green” elements into service activities and provide environmental service projects during regional member trainings.



The Eastern Iowa Conservation Alliance AmeriCorps program placed members with eight county conservation departments, with the goals of preserving and protecting natural resources and improving outdoor recreational opportunities. Participating counties included Black Hawk, Buchanan, Iowa, Jackson, Linn, Louisa, Scott, and Muscatine. Members recruited community volunteers to work alongside them, with the end result that 1,805 acres of native habitat were restored for wildlife and 58 miles of trail were established or restored so that residents may have better access to natural areas. This AmeriCorps program also allowed the counties to reach over 6,000 youth through educational programs, often taking programs “on the road” as many schools and youth centers have seen field trip budgets reduced.

Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps is a long-standing program of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, in which members are placed statewide to support natural resource conservation initiatives both on public lands and through outreach and education to private landowners. Service activities encompass a wide range of efforts, from trail building and habitat restoration in state parks, to development and delivery of new educational programs for park visitors, and volunteer recruitment. Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps members also responded to natural disasters throughout the state as needed, providing the tools and skills needed by Iowa communities, notably during central Iowa flood events and following the failure of the Lake Delhi dam.

Iowa Green Corps programming, with support from the Iowa Power Fund, exceeded all performance measure targets for the 2009-2010 AmeriCorps program year, with great positive impact in the communities served as evidenced by data collection, partner feedback and community/client survey responses. The data on energy savings per year through the projects implemented is impressive from even a one-year standpoint. From a long term view, the one-time investment of resources will provide these energy savings every year and become more valuable as time passes and the cost of energy increases. Green Iowa AmeriCorps teams based in Cedar Falls and Cedar Rapids partnered with local governments, organizations, businesses and private citizens to provide home weatherization, community outreach, and educational programs about energy conservation and efficiency. Dubuque and West Union each had a Green VISTA Corps member placed in the community to build the capacity of environmental sustainability efforts, with a focus on energy issues.

Performance Measures (target in parentheses)

- Education Programs (50) – 95
- Attendees at Educational Programs – 4,283
- Property Owners Advised or Weatherization Improvements Implemented (350) – 6,209
- Volunteer Hours Recruited (1,000) – 1,265
- Team Projects Implemented (21) – 237
- Federal Match Resources – \$361,925
- Homes Weatherized – 212
- Long-Term Energy Savings in Dollars/Year – 10 Years: \$515,780 - 20 Years: \$1,031,560
- Energy Savings in Kilowatt Hours/Year – 65,108 KWH
- Energy Savings in Gallons of Water/Year – 5,159,640 gallons

Opportunity & Youth Corps

In the 2009-2010 AmeriCorps program year, the ICVS supported programs that helped address economic opportunity and basic human needs through grants to the Community Corrections Improvement Association, Habitat for Humanity, Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Iowa Legal Aid, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, and a planning grant to Iowa Workforce Development. Members in these programs helped improve the quality of life for Iowans by providing crime prevention services and programs to positively reintegrate offenders into society, increasing the availability of low-income housing, addressing the needs of victims of domestic violence, increasing access to free civil legal services, and strengthening community partnerships to prevent child abuse. Some highlighted data from these programs shows that they provided services to 214 children of incarcerated parents, offered disaster assistance to 620 community members, and built 76 houses. Furthermore, of those that had completed client satisfaction surveys, 83.25% of clients served reported an increased quality of life resulting from services provided by the AmeriCorps program. Additionally, during the 2009-2010 program year we worked to plan the ICVS's first ever Youth Corps program, which began operating in the fall of 2010 to help youth who have dropped out of high school or who are at risk of dropping out to earn their high school diploma or GED and to perform community service that increases their job skills in the green construction field.



VISTA Corps

Over the course of 2010 the ICVS VISTA project saw six AmeriCorps VISTA members successfully complete their year-long terms of service and the enrollment of six more members, plus a VISTA leader. Our VISTA members serve both directly in the ICVS office and at partner organizations that offer placements in our priority areas of Volunteer

Management (with an emphasis on emergency/disaster volunteers), Environmental Sustainability, Youth Development, and Economic Opportunity. Over the latest 12 month period for which data is available, our VISTA members reported recruiting volunteers who provided more than 2,000 hours of community service and developing nearly \$11,000 in cash and in-kind resources to support their projects. Additionally, in the summer of 2010 the ICVS was awarded ten VISTA summer associate positions for which we recruited and placed members across the state serving in summer youth employment programs. Members helped increase the capacity of these programs to serve more at-risk youth; through these efforts 244 individuals were offered employment skills training and members were directly involved in placing 22 youth in summer jobs. The AmeriCorps VISTA program is a great additional resource that we can offer to communities or organizations that are not in need of or are not in a position to host a larger AmeriCorps State program.



VISTA

Volunteers In Service To America

Education Corps

ICVS provided funding, training, technical assistance, and oversight to four education and youth development programs during the 2009-2010 program year. These programs, located at host sites throughout the state, aimed to meet one of the Corporation for National and Community's top priority areas, "ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth," particularly through providing mentors for young people and giving them opportunities to engage in communities themselves. In total, 115 AmeriCorps members served in the four organizations.

AmeriCorps members and programs reported the following accomplishments:

- 2,807 community volunteers recruited and managed, accounting for 71,025 hours of volunteering
- 2,880 youth matched with caring adult mentors
- 11,941 youth provided with "Safe Places" to play and learn during out-of-school hours
- 2,637 youth engaged in "Healthy Start" programming to promote nutrition and exercise
- 1,550 youth learned about school-to-work transition through the "Marketable Skills" initiative
- 1,616 youth participated in service projects through the "Opportunities to Serve"

Preliminary measurements indicate that, per program, between 60 to 100 percent of youth served are demonstrating improvement in positive youth development criteria (measured by the Iowa Youth Survey). Additionally, the ICVS partnership with Iowa Campus Compact yielded 85 members serving on college campuses around Iowa to connect other college students to volunteer opportunities in their communities. As mentioned earlier, the Iowa Campus Compact AmeriCorps program was a significant contributor to increasing the Iowa college volunteering rate from 32nd in the country in 2006 to 2nd in 2009.

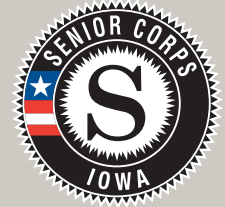
Learn & Serve

ICVS is one of only three commissions in the country selected to receive a community-based service learning grant. The grant provides \$500,000 in federal funds over a three-year period. The Reach Out Iowa program, operated through Iowa State University 4H Extension, aims to connect youth in six Iowa communities (Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Waterloo, Humboldt, Marshalltown and Winterset) with service-learning opportunities. Service-learning connects volunteers to learning opportunities coinciding with academic curricula or key learning areas like leadership, teamwork, communication, and civic engagement. Grant staff persevered through the first year of the program, despite the significant challenges posed by the reorganization of Iowa 4H and its impact on the local sites identified in the grant. For year two, Reach Out Iowa has expanded its reach to additional communities through regionalization, as well as partnering with statewide organizations. For 2011, the program has targeted more than 4,300 children that can be engaged in service through various community organizations, which would be on track to meet the grant's three-year goal of reaching 6,900 students. The Commission and the Extension provide training, technical assistance, funding, opportunities for partnership development, and evaluation support to local organizations through the sub-sites and statewide partnership.



RSVP

The Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service distributed just under \$180,000 in state funding to Iowa's RSVP programs, which was used to supplement federal funding of \$1,070,467. Through this program, Iowans age 55 and over have an opportunity to make new community connections while helping fellow citizens through RSVP assignments.



Twenty-one RSVP projects placed 6,055 volunteers in assignments to meet vital community needs; those volunteers served more than 565,000 hours. The cost to Iowa taxpayers for this valuable service is less than 35-cents per hour. The amounts awarded and counties served are listed below:

City	County	Amount
Boone	Boone	\$ 10,779
Carroll	Carroll	\$ 5,015
Cedar Rapids	Linn	\$ 5,015
Clinton	Clinton	\$ 5,015
Council Bluffs	Mills, Pottawattamie	\$ 15,888
Davenport	Scott	\$ 5,015
Decorah	Winnebago	\$ 13,169
Des Moines	Dallas, Polk, Warren	\$ 5,015
Dubuque	Dubuque	\$ 5,015
Fort Dodge	Webster	\$ 15,888
Fort Madison	North Lee County	\$ 5,015

City	County	Amount
Iowa City	Johnson, Iowa, Muscatine	\$ 29,888
Mason City	Cerro Gordo, Worth, Hancock, Winnebago	\$ 5,015
Mount Pleasant	Henry	\$ 10,779
Newton	Jasper	\$ 5,015
Ottumwa	Monroe, Wapello	\$ 5,015
Sioux City	Woodbury	\$ 5,015
Spencer	Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Palo Alto	\$ 5,015
Story City	Story, Marshall	\$ 13,360
Waterloo	Blackhawk, Fayette	\$ 5,015
Webster City	Hamilton, Wright	\$ 5,015

Iowa Mentoring Partnership

The ICVS continues to expand its initiative to ensure that children in Iowa have access, through quality mentoring services, to a consistent and caring adult role model. This year, the Iowa Mentoring Partnership successfully awarded program certification to seven new mentoring programs. In total, Iowa had more than 75 certified mentoring programs, serving 74 of Iowa's 99 counties, which supported more than 5,000 quality mentoring relationships.



Statewide Mentoring Data

- 75 certified mentoring programs working to uphold quality mentoring practices
- Approximately 5,500 active mentoring matches and 3,000 youth on mentoring waiting lists

Training Opportunities

- 34 certified mentoring program coordinators attended the Iowa Mentoring Partnership's free 2010 Spring Mentoring Training, supported through a grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health (Byrne-Jag Mentoring Collaborative Grant)
- 36 certified mentoring program coordinators attended the Iowa Nonprofit Summit as a designee in November – three mentoring track workshops were facilitated by Dr. Susan Weinberger, a nationally recognized expert in the mentoring field
- 38 certified mentoring program coordinators attended the Friends for Youth webinar, Keeping Youth in Your Program SAFE by Effectively Screening Volunteers

Training Opportunities (*continued*)

- 12 certified mentoring program coordinators attended the Search Institute's Sparks: Igniting the Hidden Strengths of Teens training in October – Training was provided in collaboration with the Lamoni SAFE Coalition
- 31 certified mentoring program coordinators participated in the first of a series of quarterly webinars offered by Dee Paddock, MSW. Quarterly series supported through a grant from the Iowa Department of Public Health (Byrne-Jag Mentoring Collaborative Grant)

National Mentoring Month 2010

- Iowa Mentoring Partnership served for the third consecutive year as the Lead Local Agency for National Mentoring Month in Iowa and distributed nearly 15,000 pieces of promotional materials to local, certified mentoring programs
- Nearly 3,500 recognition certificates were distributed to mentors
- 19 certified mentoring programs were recognized on the floor of the Iowa House of Representatives and participated in annual Mentoring Day on the Hill legislative event
- Four outstanding mentors were awarded the first Excellence in Mentoring Awards

Resources

- Iowa Mentoring Partnership Peer Mentoring Program developed to increase statewide networking and resource sharing opportunities among certified mentoring programs
- Statewide Recruitment Handbook, E-Mentoring Manual, National Mentoring Month Preparation Manual, and Iowa Mentoring Partnership brochure created and distributed to local, certified mentoring programs
- At least one regional meeting was hosted by members of the Iowa Mentoring Partnership's Provider Board in each region of the state to encourage regional networking and resource-sharing opportunities

volunteer recognition

Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame

The following Iowa individuals and groups were inducted into the Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame by First Lady Mari Culver during a special ceremony held in the state capitol building on February 23, 2010 as part of the 5th annual Volunteer Awareness Day:

- Family Category — Vince and Judy Else of Nodaway
- Individual Category
 - Mary Avelleyra of Fort Dodge
 - Rex Eno of Cedar Rapids
 - Ying Sa of Des Moines
 - Ray Strekal of Perry
 - Eric Wilson of West Des Moines.



Governor's Volunteer Awards

785 volunteers were presented with Governor's Volunteer Awards during regional recognition ceremonies in 2010. This program was established in 1982 to honor and recognize volunteers for the commitment, service and time that they contribute to Iowa's government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Volunteers may be nominated for an award in one of four categories: Individual, Group, Length of Service, or Disaster Volunteer.

training & technical assistance

With a volunteer retention rate of 76.9%, Iowa ranks 2nd in the country, demonstrating our ability to offer high quality opportunities that maintain volunteer enthusiasm. The national average for volunteer retention is 65%, with some states retaining less than half of their volunteers each year. Improving retention is one of the main strategies successfully employed to increase Iowa's overall volunteer rate; just as plugging a leaky bucket will help to keep up the total water level, preventing the loss of volunteers helps to maintain our total volunteer rate and helps increase efficiencies at nonprofit organizations by conserving resources expended in training new volunteers and building their capacity to provide services and address community needs. Many ICVS efforts are designed with the goal of increasing volunteer retention, including:

- Increasing the capacity of local organizations to manage volunteers by providing human capital in the form of AmeriCorps members and programs and RSVP members.
- Providing funding and support to foster local volunteer management infrastructure through the development of new volunteer centers and by providing resources to support the Volunteer Centers of Iowa
- Supporting the infrastructure for engaging volunteers in times of disaster by hosting, in partnership with local Emergency Management officials, Volunteer Reception Center trainings designed to help communities effectively connect unaffiliated volunteers during a disaster
- Strengthening the skills and abilities of existing volunteer managers by providing training and support through programs such as the Iowa Mentoring Partnership and events like the Iowa Nonprofit Summit.
- Providing direct training to national service programs and participants on a variety of issues including: leadership development, disability inclusion, performance, financial management, citizenship, and many more.

Iowa is doing more than many states to strengthen our ability to capitalize on the commitment of our citizens to positively impact their communities and to address important community needs through meaningful service.

volunteer recruitment

Statewide Volunteer Portal

ICVS continues to build and promote its statewide volunteer management system, "Volunteer Solutions", making it extremely easy for individuals to locate volunteer opportunities in their communities. This system also enables the state to offer a onestop Web portal, **www.volunteeriowa.org**, that can be utilized to coordinate state and national Days of Service, as well as managing response and recovery volunteers during times of disaster — not only volunteers from Iowa, but from across the country. Currently, administrators of local Volunteer Solutions systems throughout Iowa participate in a Volunteer Solutions users' network through bimonthly conference calls to provide technical assistance to one another.



National and State Days of Service

Each year there are many opportunities for ICVS to promote citizen volunteerism by highlighting special service events. As of 2010, ICVS has designated ten days for special promotion. These days of service are spread throughout the year and each have a special emphasis and allow for unique partnerships. Numerous projects were held all over the state on these designated Days of Service:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (3rd Monday in January). Emphasis on civil rights and cultural understanding.
- Aaron Eilerts Day of Service and Giving (February 24). Focus is school based projects.
- National Volunteer Week (one week in April). To recognize and celebrate the tremendous efforts of all volunteers in Iowa.
- Global Youth Service Day (over a weekend in April). Focuses upon mobilizing youth to improve their communities through service and service-learning. ICVS serves as the lead agency for Global Youth Service Day in Iowa. In 2009, ICVS provided approximately \$2500 in mini-grants to local organizations to support youth-led service-learning projects. In total, 27 organizations engaged 1,890 youth in meaningful opportunities to make a difference in their communities.
- Shelter Awareness Day (one Saturday in April). Focus on raising awareness of domestic violence and homeless youth shelters across Iowa.
- Join Hands Day (May). Unites young people and adults in an effort to make their neighborhoods better.
- AmeriCorps Week (May). Provides the perfect opportunity for AmeriCorps members, alums, grantees, program partners, and friends to shine a spotlight on AmeriCorps and to motivate more Americans to serve.
- September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (September 11). Designated by the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act as a National Day of Service to honor those who lost their lives on 9/11/01.
- Senior Corps Week (September). To highlight the impact of Seniors Corps volunteers (age 55+) in Iowa, celebrate their service, and invite others to join.
- Make A Difference Day (October). A celebration of neighbors helping neighbors through service.

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